

TEMPLE BETH AM STRATEGIC PLAN: 2017-2020

Annual Meeting Comments on Key Findings: May 21, 2017

POINTS THAT MOST RESONATED WITH THE GROUP

Community Connections and Engagement

- Be able to know more people's names; meet new people and make friends, making going to Temple a more intimate experience – **5 checks**
- Learn more about who is in the Congregation, and their interests, passions, and skills. Know our community better so we can better connect and engage people -**4 checks**

Use Bulletin to help with this

- Have affinity groups, be able connect to people with common interests; more social opportunities outside Temple – **6 checks**

Work with BAPA on these – promote – 1 check

- Have small group dinners – holiday or Shabbat or just an evening – **5 checks**
- Make friends and have events with people in one's neighborhood – **3 checks**
- Have more opportunities to connect socially with Religious School parents; create cohorts
- Have more young family activities and chances to connect

Post-It Note Comments:

- ✓ March Forum and today..."greyer than our membership"
- ✓ Communication between committees!
- ✓ Work of reconnecting members whose children are now grown and come to Temple very little if at all
- ✓ We are very overdue for a TBA database – knowledge base of skills/names, connections – 2 checks
- ✓ Language census would be interesting
- ✓ Map of birthplaces
- ✓ Revive dinners for 8 Program run by Cecily Kaplan and Susan Schulkin in 90s
- ✓ More opportunities for inter-generational contact – 2 checks
- ✓ Elevate our food and drink game to foster more social interaction – be good hosts
- ✓ If small groups are so important, why is there no longer a Havurah committee? -- 3 checks
- ✓ Reinvigorate Havarahs! – 6 checks
- ✓ Concur – replicate in some fashion the parties organized to meet new Rabbi, for other TBA purposes
- ✓ TBA welcomes guests. We need better wall signs and directions to bathrooms for all who come to our facilities
- ✓ Critical issue RE TBA facility: Our Social Hall is harmful to hearing whenever there is a large group talking. E.g. this meeting was very energetic (Excellent!) but the noise level (dB) was so

high that extreme discomfort was created. Often I and others have to leave this room (and foyer) because of noise level. We need sound dampening!!!

- ✓ Add photos to online directory for all who are willing
- ✓ More group activities for seniors who begin to feel disconnected – 1 check

Temple Culture

- Improve overall social experience of being at Temple – know and be known; feel like you belong
- Engage volunteers in all aspects of Temple life
- Personalize New Member Welcome/Orientation; have more outreach; maybe assign buddies
- Storytelling: create a culture of storytelling, sharing and celebration – **2 checks**
- Have more involvement and input on social action activities – **YES!!!**
- Have more fun; be a more fun place to go – **2 checks**

Worship

- Deeper connections with clergy; better communication too – **1 check**
- Alternative types of Shabbat service options – contemplative, innovative, outdoors, could be led by youth or Congregants – **7 checks**

Post-It Note Comments:

Connection with and learning about Isreal

Small worship groups and/or small, deeper, intimate sharing groups. Want more than social/surface connection to others

Learning: Programs and Activities

- Make the Religious School curriculum relevant to 21st Century families and kids; more fun, engaging and less like school – **1 check**

What's wrong with school? It's about curiosity and growing

Use other teaching methods; don't show movies, rather engage youth and make it interesting to them so they actually learn

- More ways to connect and engage inter-generationally -- programs or informal activities – **3 checks**

- More volunteer opportunities, especially cooking for congregants in need – **3 checks**

For youth

- More/different social justice programming – **1 check**

Connect with small group network

- More/different programs for seniors, empty nesters – **3 checks**

For individual members

- Opportunities to learn about other religions – **2 checks**

For all ages

- Connect SEED families to TBA and vice versa; create pathways to support connections – **2 checks**

Post-It Note Comments:

- ✓ Current social justice programming rocks! Loved all the opportunities since November. And white privilege book group.
- ✓ Attended a Sunday forum a few years back where the topic was Israel/Palestinian conflict. An outside educator facilitated. We wrote our thoughts on difficult issues on boards and got to talk one on one. It was a really powerful and helpful event. Would like more like this.
- ✓ Clear protocol from taking program idea to fruition. How much community support is needed before staff can implement program?
- ✓ Increase programs for seniors

Communications

- More effective communications: fewer emails, more social media and a different approach to our social media use. Online strategies to elevate Temple's presence and profile - - 1 check, 2 minuses
- Better communication about: Vision/goals; financials; volunteer opportunities
More transparency
- Different ways to communicate with different generations; more communication with Youth -- Especially for Temple wide events of interest to them – **2 checks**
- Share stories about people in the Congregation; celebratory information about people online, and in print – **4 checks**

Post-It Note Comments:

- ✓ Stream services and events (speakers)
- ✓ Actually find emails very helpful – 1 check
- ✓ Keep an opt-in email option – not everyone consumes social media

Financials

- Get Temple on stable financial footing – **3 checks**
- Have more money for innovative programs
- Have clear financial information and transparency – **4 checks**
- Have all congregants pulling their weight according to their means – **2 checks**
- Nachshon Campaign -- "Retire the Debt" – **1 check**
- Build a greater culture of philanthropy based on relationships

Post-It Note Comments:

- ✓ Agree on dues sliding scale especially for senior. What about offering to volunteer to help cover operations costs?
- ✓ Congregation should not vote on the budget – that is the Board's job

- ✓ Is there a way for this exercise to be sent to the whole membership, including those not here here – to get everyone’s input?
- ✓ Endowment

Board Development and Lay Leadership

- Strengthen the Board and its processes; have clear reporting structures
- Strengthen relationship between Board and staff - **1 check**
- Have processes to engage volunteers and identify potential new lay leaders – **6 checks**

Post-It Note Comments:

- ✓ Invite/invest in a meaningful leadership development group – becomes a cohort of new leaders and connect with one another

COMMENTS ON THE SURVEY BOARDS

- ✓ Demographics of survey responses: How does this compare to the membership profiles? In general?
- ✓ Worth noticing that this is a heavily post-childrearing segment of the community

RE Program/Activity communication – Communication is not very good or excellent to new members, regarding encouraging them to get involved

- ✓ No mention of social Action? Very concerning!!! (2 separate comments)
- ✓ More fun, social engagement, i.e. Cabaret Night, Beth Am Talent Night, Beth Am 2-wheel club, Outdoor summer BBQ, computer coaching, etc
- ✓ Related to other comments and especially given current politics, I think outreach and deep engagement with other minority communities, while taxing, will yield many benefits for our community! Hispanic, East African, black, Asian
- ✓ Willingness to serve in Leadership positions: Very important to address – need new and young leaders too.
- ✓ Grab those 113 volunteering people!
- ✓ After responding to announced or perceived opportunities, and experiencing Temple response: nonexistent, chaotic, uninformed. Need coordinator and policy to nurture volunteer willingness. (1 check)
- ✓ Committee list/fair feature. Tell us what committees are doing.

Communication findings: this is obviously a BIG issue

- ✓ Pastoral care communications: Are there volunteer possibilities to support clergy on this one? (Separate response: Yes there are)